



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC

Office of the Assistant Secretary

23 JUN 2003

SAF/IEI
1665 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC 20330-1665

The Honorable Duncan L. Hunter
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515-6035

Dear Mr. Chairman

This letter is to notify you that I have approved a seven-phased facility project undertaking at Eielson AFB, Alaska, to repair a network of concrete underground utility distribution system tunnels, called utilidors, which house and protect key utilities infrastructure from the harsh arctic environment. Congress appropriated \$8.5M in FY03 operation and maintenance (O&M) funds specifically for the 2003 phase of this work. The remaining phases are currently unfunded. Because this undertaking exceeds the \$7.5M threshold, we are notifying you at this time.

Availability of reliable steam from Eielson's central heat and power plant is critical to Air Force operations. Utility failure in the middle of winter, when temperatures are commonly -40 degrees Fahrenheit or colder, could have catastrophic results for Eielson and its mission. The utilidors and associated piping were constructed in the 1950's and have long exceeded their design life. Many years of significant wear have created a considerable risk to both personnel and mission.

This project will repair by replacement deteriorated and undersized piping that does not meet current industry standards and requirements. Replaced steam lines will require less maintenance and provide a safer environment for maintenance personnel. For the purpose of Congressional notification, we consider the seven phases, one per year, as one project costing \$69.2M.

We have chosen to accomplish this project under the authority of Title 10 United States Code, Section 2811. The work is classified as repair and the use of operation and maintenance funds provides the flexibility to plan the work with minimum disruption to operations while balancing our operation and maintenance and military construction programs.

A similar letter has been sent to the Ranking Minority Member of your Committee.

Sincerely



FRED W. KUHN

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
(Installations)